

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS:FUNSETH:JNP

APPROVED BY EA:PCHABIB

M:LEAGLEBURGER

S/CCT:FEAREY

S/S-O:APSHANKLE

----- 068003

Z 041315Z AUG 75 ZFF6

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY FLASH

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR FLASH

AMEMBASSY TOKYO FLASH

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM FLASH

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE -- KUALA LUMPUR TERRORIST INCIDENT

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM EAGLEBURGER AND HABIB

FOR NESSEN FROM S/PRS (FUNSETH)

1. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM MEDIA, DEPARTMENT
SPOKESMAN HAS BEEN SAYING:

- STATE DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS THAT THE U.S. EMBASSY IN
KUALA LUMPUR REPORTED SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT EDT THAT
ARMED GUNMEN, IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS OF THE
JAPANESE RED ARMY (JRA) HAD SEIZED U.S. CONSUL ROBERT
STEBBINS AND 3 MALAYSIAN EMPLOYEES IN THE EMBASSY'S
CONSULAR SECTION.

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- SUBSEQUENTLY, WE LEARNED THAT THE ARMED GUNMEN NUM-

BERED FOUR AND HAD SEIZED AS HOSTAGES APPROXIMATELY 50 PERSONS WHO WERE ON THE 9TH FLOOR OF THE BUILDING WHERE THE U.S. EMBASSY IS LOCATED. THESE PERSONS INCLUDED THE SWEDISH CHARGE, FREDRIK BERGENSTROBLE AND HIS SECRETARY; THREE AMERICAN CITIZENS.

---- MALAYSIAN AUTHORITIES AND JAPANESE EMBASSY OFFICIALS

IN KUALA LUMPUR ARE IN CONTACT WITH THE TERRORISTS.

- THE TERRORISTS HAVE MADE CERTAIN DEMANDS OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT INCLUDING THE RELEASE OF SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE JRA IMPRISONED IN JAPAN.

- CONSUL STEBBINS IS MARRIED AND HAS TWO SONS. HIS HOMETOWN IS CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

2. IF ASKED WHAT U.S. POLICY IS IN THIS KIND OF SITUATION, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HAS BEEN SAYING THAT USG POLICY IS WELL-KNOWN AND WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE -- CONSISTENT WITH THIS POLICY -- TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES UNHARMED.

3. FYI - WE HAVE INFORMED PRESS, OFF-THE-RECORD, THAT IN ORDER TO AVOID MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT COULD CAUSE THE TERRORISTS TO MURDER THE HOSTAGES WHILE THE MALAYSIAN AND JAPANESE AUTHORITIES ARE NEGOTIATING WITH THEM, WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO BE DRAWN OUT TO EXPLAIN SPECIFICALLY WHAT OUR POLICY IS. HOWEVER, IF PRESSED OR ASKED POINT BLANK TO CONFIRM OR DENY WHETHER U.S. POLICY IN FACT REMAINS THAT USG WILL NOT PAY RANSOM TO TERRORISTS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN RELEASE OF USG OR AMCIT HOSTAGES, WE WILL, OF COURSE, CONFIRM. HOWEVER, THUS FAR, NO REPORTER HAS PRESSED FOR SUCH AN EXPLICIT REITERATION. IF ASKED, WE ALSO ARE CONFIRMING THAT WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH JAPANESE AND SWEDISH AUTHORITIES IN WASHINGTON AS WELL AS IN TOKYO AND STOCKHOLM. INGERSOLL

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